

not less patriotic, wing of Congress. The concluding paragraphs of Dickinson's draft, however, are substantially copied from Jefferson. One passage from Jefferson's portion of address is often quoted by historians on account of the import of one of its words. "We mean not to dissolve the union which has so long and so happily subsisted between and which we sincerely wish to see restored. Necessity has : *yet* driven us into that desperate¹ measure."

In July, 1775, Congress, by ballot, chose Benjamin Franklin Thomas Jefferson, John Adams and R. H. Lee as a committee to report on Lord North's "Conciliatory Proposition." Jefferson had already drawn Virginia's answer to the overture, ; his colleagues on the committee requested him to draft the reply of Congress also. This he did to the satisfaction of the committee, and his report with slight emendations was promptly adopted by Congress. In this reply of Congress he necessarily followed quite closely the form of reply drawn up by him for the House of Burgesses of Virginia. The tone of the document was sullen and defiant. It held firmly to a denial of Parliament's right to "intermeddle with our provisions for support of civil government. * * * But while Parliament pursues its plan of civil government within its own jurisdiction, we hope also to pursue our own without molestation. In a few weeks hard work and an aggressive and fearless nation had brought Jefferson to the front in Congress. "He was prompt, frank, explicit, and decisive upon committees and Convention," said John Adams, "that he soon seized upon heart."

Congress adjourned in August, 1775, and Jefferson returned to Richmond to take his seat as the representative of Albemarle in the Virginia Convention. Immediately he was elected to represent the colony in the next Congress. The election, -by ballot, with the following result: Peyton Randolph votes, R. H. Lee 88, Thomas Jefferson 85, Benjamin Harrison 83, Thomas Nelson 66, Richard Bland 61, George Wythe 54. A question came before the Convention at this time that had Jefferson a most abiding interest. It was a question of religion.